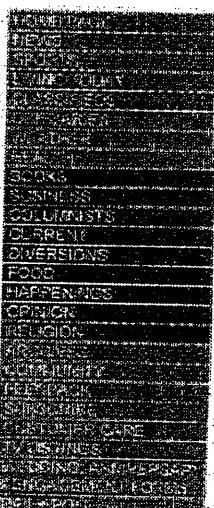


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Juror: Siegelman jury didn't fight

By Bob Johnson
Associated Press Writer

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MONTGOMERY — The jury that convicted former Alabama Gov. Don Siegelman and former HealthSouth CEO Richard Scrushy after 11 days of deliberations and several notes to the judge was never as divided or conflicted as it might have appeared, according to one of the 12 jurors.

"It was complicated and it took us a long time to sort through the evidence," juror [REDACTED] said in an interview with The Associated Press on Friday.

The jury convicted Siegelman and Scrushy and acquitted two Siegelman Cabinet members — former chief of staff Paul Hamrick and former state transportation director Mack Roberts — on the 42nd day of the marathon trial.

Jurors spent 11 days evaluating prosecutors' claims that there was a long-standing practice of trading campaign donations for government favors during Siegelman's terms as governor from 1999-2003 and lieutenant governor from 1995-1999.

[REDACTED] said reports she has heard that jurors were fighting and didn't get along were wrong. During the lengthy deliberations jurors sent two notes to U.S. District Judge [REDACTED]

Mark Fuller reporting they had not been able to reach a verdict, but she said they never stopped working.

"We didn't want to come to a rush decision on anything. We were committed to coming up with a correct verdict," [REDACTED] said. "We discussed the issues from varying perspectives and points of views."

Jury foreman [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] said he and other jurors began each day of deliberations by holding hands and praying.

[REDACTED] told the Montgomery Advertiser for a story Saturday there was no racial rancor or anger of any sort among the seven men and five women — seven blacks and five whites.

"We were all really good friends. There was a bond between us," he told the newspaper. "It never got personal."

[REDACTED] said the lengthy deliberations were caused by the number of indictments, the number of people charged and the "complex issues."

In a written statement to The Birmingham News, [REDACTED] said jurors thoroughly reviewed the evidence. "We talked about it from all possible angles. We listened to each other. We tried our very best to leave 'no stone unturned.' And in the end, our vote will speak for itself."

[REDACTED] said jurors got along so well during the trial that several hours after the verdict was announced some of them went out to Sinclair's and Bud's, popular night spots near downtown Montgomery that were mentioned frequently by trial witnesses as hangouts for those close to the Siegelman administration.

"We heard so much about them, we wanted to take a look for ourselves," [REDACTED] said.

Scrushy was convicted of six counts and Siegelman seven — mostly concerning what prosecutors said was a scheme where Siegelman promised Scrushy a seat on an influential hospital regulatory board in exchange for Scrushy arranging \$500,000 in contributions to Siegelman's 1999 campaign for

a statewide lottery. The jury acquitted Siegelman on 25 other counts, including two charges that he violated federal racketeering laws.

[REDACTED] was one of the youngest members of the jury, usually sitting on the front row of the jury box, paying close attention.

Impressed by evidence

She said she was impressed by the government's evidence in the charges against Siegelman and Scrushy concerning the seat on the Alabama Certificate of Need Review Board.

"The evidence was overwhelming and compelling that the verdict was guilty on those counts," [REDACTED] said.

A key witness, former Siegelman aide Nick Bailey, testified that Siegelman and Scrushy met privately in 1999 and that afterward the then-governor told him that Scrushy promised to arrange the campaign contributions if Siegelman would agree to appoint him to the CON Board. Defense attorneys said that Bailey, who has pleaded guilty, was trying to get a lighter sentence, but [REDACTED] said her decision was based on more than just Bailey's testimony.

"Nick Bailey was not the only person who testified on those issues. There were people from HealthSouth, bankers," [REDACTED] said. "I tried very hard not to put all of my decision-making on any one witness."

Other key witnesses were lobbyist Lanny Young and toll bridge developer Jim Allen.

Young, who has also pleaded guilty, testified that he had a long-standing agreement with Hamrick, Siegelman and Bailey to give gifts and campaign donations in exchange for receiving favorable government treatment on various schemes and business deals.

Allen, who was not charged, said while Siegelman was running for governor in 1999, he promised to let Allen pick the next transportation director in exchange for a campaign donation. Roberts, who had worked for Siegelman, eventually got the job; though some witnesses testified Roberts did not initially want the post and that he was not

Siegelman's first choice.

Defense attorneys also claimed Young and Allen were lying to get favorable treatment from prosecutors.

"I evaluated each one of them individually," [redacted] said. "I evaluated them cautiously to see how they matched up with other witnesses."

Concerning the blanket not guilty verdicts against Hamrick and Roberts, she said she did not find the evidence against them as "compelling" as that against Scrushy and Siegelman on the charges concerning the CON Board seat.

[redacted] described herself as an "Air Force brat" who did not grow up in Alabama and did not know a lot about Siegelman and Scrushy at the start of the trial. Because of that she said she didn't go into the trial thinking about it as an "important Alabama case."

[redacted] said it was her first time on a jury and she was nervous in the beginning.

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